

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE 31-10-2008		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)
4. TITLE AND SUBJECT  Measuring the Role of Cultural Awareness in Tracing the Human Terrain		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
		5b. GRANT NUMBER		
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)  Timothy Moore  Paper Advisor: Douglas N. Hime, Professor, JMO		5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
		5e. TASK NUMBER		
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A paper submitted to the Naval War College faculty in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.				
14. ABSTRACT  In recent years both military theorists and practitioners have been urging that U.S. military forces develop and make use of more cultural awareness, said to be needed everywhere from the streets of Fallujah to the halls of the War Colleges. Historically, however, military involvement with anthropologists, the social scientists most focused on developing profound insights into foreign cultures, has ended in recriminations, especially after the war in Vietnam. The Department of Defense has launched a new attempt to harness the perspectives and analytical tools of anthropology (and other social sciences) by fielding Human Terrain System teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, but some anthropologists are strongly opposed to any collaboration. Even if the basic issues are resolved, military commanders may need to learn to see the world through the anthropological prism, and may need to modify missions or procedures in order to prevent a resounding clash of two distinctly different professional codes of conduct.				
15. SUBJECT TERMS Cultural awareness, anthropology, Human Terrain System, professional ethics				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES  24
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED		
				19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

**Measuring the Role of Cultural Awareness**  
**in Tracing the Human Terrain**

by

Timothy Moore  
Department of State

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

31 October 2008

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## **Abstract**

In recent years both military theorists and practitioners have been urging that U.S. military forces develop and make use of more cultural awareness, said to be needed everywhere from the streets of Fallujah to the halls of the War Colleges. Historically, however, military involvement with anthropologists, the social scientists most focused on developing profound insights into foreign cultures, has ended in recriminations, especially after the war in Vietnam. The Department of Defense has launched a new attempt to harness the perspectives and analytical tools of anthropology (and other social sciences) by fielding Human Terrain System teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, but some anthropologists are strongly opposed to any collaboration. Even if the basic issues are resolved, military commanders may need to learn to see the world through the anthropological prism, and may need to modify missions or procedures in order to prevent a resounding clash of two distinctly different professional codes of conduct.

## INTRODUCTION

However you define culture, each human being has grown up in and lives in a particular culture, closer to or farther from one's own, when measured by habits of thought or habits of action, by language or by assumptions and expectations.<sup>i</sup> Rare individuals are said to be at home in two or more cultures, by having one North American and one South American parent, for example, but for most people each mile of distance apart adds a certain measure of mutual incomprehension. For two people born far enough apart, the misunderstandings can go far beyond the kind of social gaffe that becomes much more amusing when retold, to swell into serious or even life-threatening communication failures. Two societies energetically and relentlessly talking past each other is a recipe for disaster, since increasing the volume doesn't increase understanding, just the decibel level of the crash.

Coalition forces led by the United States failed to restore civil order quickly enough after the invasion of Iraq in March, 2003, and their leaders failed to understand how seriously subsequent coalition actions (house to house searches, offending men in public, etc.) violated core Iraqi cultural values.<sup>ii</sup> Those combined failures turned what had been a swift victory with conventional arms into a protracted and difficult counter-insurgency, for which U.S. troops and doctrine were ill-prepared. U.S. forces had to re-write the counter-insurgency lessons that they had painfully learned a century before in the Philippines and many military observers began looking for ways to accelerate and institutionalize that learning. Examples of successful fights against insurgencies in Malaya and the Philippines emphasized the

importance of a strategic plan built around a profound understanding of the culture in question, an understanding variously termed cultural intelligence, cultural awareness or cultural competence. For simplicity, I will use cultural awareness in this paper except as noted.

## **BACKGROUND**

Dr. John Jandora believes the current search for better cultural awareness began between the two Iraq wars: “In the mid-1990s, Marine General Anthony Zinni began making the case for the necessity of military cultural awareness as a ‘force multiplier.’”<sup>iii</sup> The need for greater understanding became more urgent as the Iraqi insurgency grew more deadly and the calls for cultural understanding multiplied.<sup>iv</sup> In 2003, press reports hinted at the chorus to come: “Clan, Family Ties Called Key to Army’s Capture of Hussein.”<sup>v</sup> That same year Congressman Ike Skelton was calling for Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld to address the shortcoming, adding pressure for change from the funding side of the organization.<sup>vi</sup> By October 2004 General Robert H. Scales, former Commandant of the U.S. Army War College, was calling for “culture-centric warfare,” noting that he had asked the returning commander of the Third Infantry Division “how well situational awareness . . . worked in Baghdad.”<sup>vii</sup> The commander answered, “I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness.”<sup>viii</sup> General Scales went on in the often-cited article to call for more money to be spent “improving how our military thinks and studies, to create a parallel transformation based on cognition and cultural awareness [as well as] a cadre of global scouts, well educated, with a penchant for languages and a comfort with strange and distant places.”<sup>ix</sup> He specifically suggested that the scouts be

supported by intelligence analysts “who are formally educated in the deductive and inductive skills to understand and interpret the information and insights provided by scouts in the field. These analysts should attend graduate school in disciplines necessary to understand human behavior and cultural anthropology.”<sup>x</sup>

Some anthropologists were quick to offer words of support, such as in Montgomery McFate and Andrea Jackson’s 2005 article in *Military Review*, titled “An Organizational Solution for DOD’s Cultural Knowledge Needs.”<sup>xi</sup> The authors proposed a combination of ethnographic field research to create a database, improved training for both troops and leaders over the long term and the provision of highly trained advisers in the field “until changes in the professional military education (PME) system can fill this gap. . . .”<sup>xii</sup> Institutions responded as well. The *2006 Quadrennial Defense Review* acknowledged that “the Department must foster a level of understanding and cultural intelligence about the Middle East and Asia comparable to that developed about the Soviet Union during the Cold War.”<sup>xiii</sup> And in his *President’s Forum* column in the Summer 2006 issue of the *Naval War College Review*, Rear Admiral Jacob Shuford could boast that “Beginning with the 2006-2007 academic year, all of our educational programs at the primary, intermediate, and senior levels will meet the requirements recently established by the Chairman of the Joint Staff for regional expertise and cultural awareness.”<sup>xiv</sup> For those unable to attend residential programs for professional military education, the Navy Professional Reading Program would also include a category addressing “Regional and Cultural Awareness, with both fiction and non-fiction books that address

regional/cultural themes.”<sup>xv</sup> By November 2007, an Air Force librarian at Maxwell Air Force Base was able to put together a bibliography of over 100 articles, books and guides addressing cultural awareness and the military, ranging from exhortations to action to guide books and joint publications.<sup>xvi</sup>

The Cultural Awareness Bandwagon was well underway, planned, funded and enthusiastically embraced by many, but is that the end of the story?

### **The Critics Counter-Attack**

Now that cultural awareness is an official topic of interest for the Department of Defense, defined and bound in layers of doctrine, precisely how the DOD planners implement the volumes of advice they have been receiving is under scrutiny; it is being studied by pundits, by academics, by the U.S. Congress and by military professionals themselves.<sup>xvii</sup> A May 2007 paper by an Air Force Major studying at the Navy War College reviewed Navy funding for language programs and for programs to expand the number of Foreign Area Officers in the Navy.<sup>xviii</sup> Both programs showed increases, but the writer questioned whether the increases were truly linked to future operational needs, or were simply based on an arbitrary 5 percent increase in overall funding for education and training programs.<sup>xix</sup> In a similar vein, he observed that the Army billets for Foreign Area Officers seemed to be tied to the needs of the Cold War, not the likely hotspots in the future, and were aimed at supporting Defense Attachés in the future as well, not the company, brigade and division commanders who might actually lead the fighting.



Another May 2007 graduate of the Navy War College, Major James Karcanes, usefully reminds us in his paper that the multiplicity of terms conceals a multiplicity of ideas and that serious questions remain about how much cultural awareness training the U.S. Armed Forces can afford, and who should receive it.<sup>xx</sup> Major Karcanes reproduces a scale laid out earlier by LTC William Wunderle in a long study for the RAND Corporation, later published by the Combat Studies Institute Press. LTC Wunderle divided the spectrum thus:

- *Cultural Consideration* (“How and Why”) is the incorporation of generic cultural concepts in common military training—knowing how and why to study culture and where to find cultural factors and expertise.
- *Cultural Knowledge* (Specific Training) is exposure to the recent history of a target culture. It includes basic cultural issues such as significant groups, actors, leaders, and dynamics, as well as cultural niceties and survival language skills.
- *Cultural Understanding* (Advanced Training) refers to a deeper awareness of the specific culture that allows general insight into thought processes, motivating factors, and other issues that directly support the military decisionmaking process.
- *Cultural Competence* (Decisionmaking and Cultural Intelligence) is the fusion of cultural understanding with cultural intelligence that allows focused insight into military planning and decisionmaking for current and future military operations. Cultural competence implies insight into the intentions of specific actors and groups.<sup>xxi</sup>

LTC Wunderle presents a very good analysis of how much cultural awareness leaders at each level of war planning would need, even if others might divide it differently.

Whatever the precise division or arrangement, many would argue that it is important to maintain functional distinctions between levels or degrees of cultural awareness (lumped together here to simplify the argument), in order to allocate funding and training time most effectively, but the key word is functional; useful distinctions should be based on the amount of information needed to carry out

specific tasks or categories of tasks. It could well be that the most appropriate, practical divisions will only emerge over time, with practice and its attendant successes and failures. That is to say, every DOD employ deployed overseas, to include contractors, would need the basic level of cultural training required in order to advance—and not hinder—the mission. This has more to do with avoiding blunders than building goodwill or developing useful intelligence. Unit commanders would need much more than this basic level, as would the intelligence analysts, the Civil Affairs and Psyops teams and the regional commanders who must ultimately rely on a well-informed gut feeling in choosing courses of action. The overall military educational system could profit from true professionals at an even higher level, with real cultural awareness/competence/insight, so that they can guide and fine-tune the curriculum and advise policy makers at the national level. The need for differences is clear, but the dividing lines (or more likely dividing zones) between the optimal levels may only become clear after a decade of effort, or more.

Various commentators who have been writing about cultural awareness over the last ten years, sometimes called cultural competence, appeared to include what LTC Wunderle describes as Cultural Understanding, point three above.<sup>xxii</sup> He maintains that: “the full benefit of the cultural awareness model can be realized only if cultural awareness is integrated into US military training and doctrine.”<sup>xxiii</sup> That effort is underway, from PME to focused pre-deployment training to the highest level currently in the field, the Human Terrain System teams.

## The Human Terrain System

Bringing the expertise of social scientists to bear on the counterinsurgency problems of Iraq and Afghanistan was a compelling idea that addressed a compelling need, so it was rapidly implemented.<sup>xxiv</sup> A Human Terrain System (HTS) office was set up under the U.S. Army TRADOC at Fort Leavenworth, where team members are being trained pre-deployment, and Dr. McFate is currently the Senior Social Science Advisor to the office.<sup>xxv</sup> The first Human Terrain Team arrived in Khost, Afghanistan, in February 2007 and more teams moved into Iraq that same summer, to assist at the brigade level and at Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). In the summer of 2008 the first Human Terrain Advisory Team (HTAT) arrived in Bagram, Afghanistan, to work at the divisional level. The HTAT coordinates the work of their colleagues at the PRTs, by collating reports to detect trends and to determine best practices, which can then be pushed back down to the brigades and PRTs, even down to individual service members.<sup>xxvi</sup> Today there are 21 HTS teams in Iraq and five in Afghanistan and the idea is catching on; both the Africa Command (AFRICOM) and the Pacific Command (PACOM) are developing operational needs statements for an HTS-related capability focusing on Phase 0 planning in their areas, to introduce the views of anthropology and the social sciences into the military decision making process.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Now that some brigade and divisional commanders can have staff members ready-equipped with the experience and analytical tools to understand the cultural motivators of both allies and adversaries, functioning as the commander's "expert intuition plug-in," is the push for better cultural awareness over? Not if history is

any guide. The problem is, the military and social scientists have traveled together down this road before and it got very rocky. There is a long history of military collaboration with social scientists, pejoratively derided as scientific collaboration with the military by its critics. How can we make it better this time? What can we learn from past mistakes?

## **Principles in Conflict**

It's not easy to rebuild a war-torn society or try to create a modern society out of random pieces of the past; fighting counter-insurgency is a complex problem, requiring a focused and patient effort that aligns many highly specialized skills, carefully synchronized and sequenced. In terms of the skills needed, an agronomist is an agronomist to some degree and a civil engineer an engineer wherever they are working, but understanding the psychology and soul of a foreign society, particularly one less westernized or urban, has "belonged" to anthropology for over a hundred years.<sup>xxviii</sup> It is important to note that doctoral level study in anthropology normally requires living with (and often befriending) your research subjects over a period of years, so that there is often an intense human bond in addition to the professional attachment. And because of the role of individual anthropologists in history's conquests, they are also particularly sensitized to the constraints of professional ethics, specifically those developed to regulate research with human subjects.<sup>xxix</sup> In response to the controversy over working with the U.S. government in Southeast Asia, the Council of the American Anthropological Association (AAA)

adopted very restrictive principles of professional responsibility in May, 1971, quoted at length in Appendix A. Note, for example, the repeated insistence that secret research and anthropology were not compatible:

**1. Relations with those studied**

. . . . In accordance with the Association's general position on clandestine and secret research, no reports should be provided to sponsors that are not also available to the general public and, where practicable, to the population studied. . . .

**2. Responsibility to the public**

. . . Anthropologists should not communicate findings secretly to some and withhold them from others. . . .

**3. Responsibility to the discipline**

. . . Anthropologists should undertake no secret research or any research whose results cannot be freely derived and publicly reported. . . .

**5. Responsibility to sponsors**

. . . Anthropologists must retain the right to make all ethical decisions in their research. They should enter into no secret agreements with sponsors regarding research, results or reports. . . .

**6. Responsibilities to one's own government and to host governments**

. . . They should demand assurance that they will not be required to compromise their professional responsibilities and ethics as a condition of their permission to pursue research. Specifically, no secret research, no secret reports or debriefings of any kind should be agreed to or given.<sup>xxx</sup>

The 1971/1986 Code explicitly stated as well that an anthropologist's paramount concern should be the welfare of his human subjects, not the project itself or his obligation to any employer. However, in 1998 the AAA published revised principles, more moderate in tone:

**Preamble**

Anthropological researchers, teachers and practitioners are members of many different communities, each with its own moral rules or codes of ethics. Anthropologists have moral obligations as members of other groups, such as the family, religion, and community, as well as the profession. . . . The purpose of this Code is to foster discussion and education. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) does not adjudicate claims for unethical

behavior. . . .The purpose of this Code is to provide AAA members and other interested persons with guidelines for making ethical choices in the conduct of their anthropological work. Because anthropologists can find themselves in complex situations and subject to more than one code of ethics, the AAA Code of Ethics provides a framework, not an ironclad formula, for making decisions. . . .

**III. Research** In both proposing and carrying out research, anthropological researchers must be open about the purpose(s), potential impacts, and source(s) of support for research projects with funders, colleagues, persons studied or providing information, and with relevant parties affected by the research. . . . Research fulfilling these expectations is ethical, regardless of the source of funding (public or private) or purpose (i.e., "applied," "basic," "pure," or "proprietary"). . . .

**A. Responsibility to people and animals with whom anthropological researchers work and whose lives and cultures they study.**

1. Anthropological researchers have primary ethical obligations to the people, species, and materials they study and to the people with whom they work. These obligations can supersede the goal of seeking new knowledge, and can lead to decisions not to undertake or to discontinue a research project when the primary obligation conflicts with other responsibilities, such as those owed to sponsors or clients. . . .

4. Anthropological researchers should obtain in advance the informed consent of persons being studied . . . or otherwise identified as having interests which might be impacted by the research. . . . Further, it is understood that the informed consent process is dynamic and continuous. . . . Informed consent, for the purposes of this code, does not necessarily imply or require a particular written or signed form. It is the quality of the consent, not the format, that is relevant. . . .<sup>xxx</sup>

Thus, although the word "secret" does not appear in the 1998 ethical guidelines, members of the American Anthropological Association still have a clear professional obligation to protect their subjects, a duty that is often reinforced by friendship and gratitude. An understandable desire to protect the academic discipline as a whole can add another layer of defense, or defensiveness, and the field is showing every sign of wanting to protect itself, further complicating the renewed partnership.

As noted above, the American Anthropological Association has been riven in the

past when some members chose to work with the U.S. government and others opposed it. That dynamic is emerging again, with heated letters pro and con in the professional journals, which is fairly normal in the social sciences; opinions often differ and feelings often heat up. However, many anthropologists regard their obligation to protect their research subjects as such a core issue that the AAA Council established a special Commission on Engagement with U.S. Security and Intelligence Agencies in 2006, to run until 2010.<sup>xxxii</sup> The Commission includes academic and non-academic anthropologists, as well as military members like Dr. Kerry Fosher, the Command Social Scientist for Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, and Dr. Laurie Rush, Cultural Resources Program Manager with the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, NY. Dr. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, commission member now and for the 1998 revisions, explained that "the commission was designed to bring in varying points of view—skeptical, supporting, even military—so that all options will be carefully examined. We believe our job is to debate the issues and then establish non-binding guidelines, to shift the responsibility to the anthropologists themselves, so that they can make their own informed decisions about whether to engage or not to engage with these projects."<sup>xxxiii</sup> Dr. Fluehr-Lobban emphasized that they want to keep the discourse civil, to avoid the divisions and bitterness of the past.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Later this year the commission plans to meet with representatives from the Human Terrain Teams and Project Minerva.<sup>xxxv</sup> It is too early to predict the outcome of these meetings, but one AAA faction would like to ban AAA members from working with the military. That would mean that any professional anthropologist who *did* accept a job with

the Human Terrain System teams (or their successors) could have a very difficult time getting an academic job in the future. And, if there were a ban, or even a public controversy and action that fell short of an outright ban, many mainstream anthropologists might decide that it was not worth the aggravation so they would refuse to work with the military anyway, leaving only those who might be inclined to relish carrying a gun into the jungle. Quite apart from any issues of suitability, or of being able to hire the best, that scenario could deprive commanders of the unbiased insights they need to be fully successful.

Viewed historically, military collaboration with social scientists seems to keep drifting towards the shore and then pulling away again, like a message in a bottle floating near the beach but never thrown quite high enough to remain ashore. Perhaps this is because of the starkly different career paths, or the different personality types attracted to each profession. But after the most memorable peaks of collaboration, during the European conquest of Africa, the First World War, the Second, the Cold War, and Vietnam, these uneasy alliances broke down in recrimination, regrets and a vow never to speak together again, to the distinct disadvantage of military commanders and policy makers the next time a need arose for academia's profound and complementary knowledge, experience and analytical skills.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Today there is a growing realization in the military that the two sides must try to work together again, to develop and transmit the kind of cultural awareness that can reduce violence and save lives, but many anthropologists remain wary.<sup>xxxvii</sup>



A commander who is going to work at the operational or tactical level with anthropologists (and by extension other social scientists) needs to be aware of their professional obligations cited above, which could at times come into conflict with operational objectives. With foresight and care, those conflicts can be minimized, but probably never eliminated.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

The revisions underway in professional military education should also help prepare future commanders for working with anthropologists and other social scientists in the field, both by inculcating a heightened appreciation for the genuine value of cultural awareness (including a better understanding of the often-opaque sources of your own culture) in communicating with those outside the military, and by learning to adopt alternative points of view to generate innovative solutions to complex problems.<sup>xxxix</sup>

## **Conclusions**

There are many efforts underway right now to determine how America's armed forces should address the need for operational cultural awareness in the future, particularly with respect to theater shaping cooperation and counter-insurgency, if such cooperation fails. Many units now receive pre-deployment training, ranging from language to identifying potential archeological sites; the FAO program has been expanded and cultural awareness has been introduced to the programs at the Naval War College;<sup>xl</sup> Human Terrain System teams are operating at both the brigade and divisional level in Afghanistan, and the topic is being energetically examined by

academics and military professionals.<sup>xli</sup> It will be some time before the most effective and cost-efficient lines of effort emerge and are ratified by experience, but it is fairly safe to predict that cultural awareness is not a silver bullet, but a powerful tool, when used correctly. How should it be used?

First, any structure to enhance cultural awareness will only remain one facet of military power; in the future troops will still need to arrive at the Area of Operations trained, equipped and properly led to employ force, if required, with increasingly complex weapons. These needs will make their own demands upon budgets and training schedules.

Second, it is reasonable to assume some correlation between the level of command and the level of cultural awareness needed to carry out the responsibilities of that command, whether the awareness is internalized through training and immersion or simply readily available from a military or civilian colleague. Stated differently, all soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines sent to engage in non-kinetic or counterinsurgency work should have some familiarity with the cultural space they are entering, including taboos and survival language, while company commanders and PRT commanders will need a much deeper understanding, in order to first recognize and then negotiate with local power-holders and possibly with coalition forces. An operational commander needs even more: a rich understanding of the cultural and historic background of the area, real insight into the psychology of both adversaries and coalition partners, and ready

access to even richer sources of understanding, whether by reaching back to an office in the United States or by walking to an office down the hall.

Third, commanders who do come into contact with professionals in the social sciences will need to learn how to communicate effectively with them, asking the right kinds of questions and grasping the answers well enough to transmit them to subordinates two echelons below. This will take goodwill, time and effort on both sides, and may well require commanders to step outside their usual “comfort zones,” since in most cases relatively senior members of the two groups will have been heavily socialized by their respective peers and professional paths. The military and anthropological communities speak a different language, tolerate ambiguity differently, see the world from different perspectives and have clear but different professional codes, which can be in conflict. These differences can easily lead to misunderstandings and frustration if they are not addressed with preparation, patience and mutual respect. Understanding the sources of their cultural differences can offer a good start to achieving that mutual respect and communication, the first step in a voyage of discovery that can end by adding a powerful new tool to the commander’s expert intuition, his intellectual arsenal.

## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> William D. Wunderle. 2006. *Through the Lens of Cultural Awareness: Appendix A*, pages 103 to 112, has an exhaustive list of how different authors and military publications have defined “culture.”

<sup>ii</sup> Thomas E. Ricks. *Fiasco The American Military Adventure in Iraq*.

<sup>iii</sup> Dr. John W. Jandora, “*Military Cultural Awareness: From Anthropology to Application*.” Opens by saying: “In the mid 1990s, Marine General Anthony Zinni began making the case for the necessity of military cultural awareness as a ‘force multiplier.’”

<sup>iv</sup> William D. Wunderle. 2006:61 “The US military needs soldiers (and Marines) who can deal with a diversity of peoples and cultures, tolerate ambiguity, take initiative, and ask questions.”

<sup>v</sup> Vernon Loeb, “Clan, Family Ties Called Key to Army’s Capture of Hussein,” *The Washington Post*, 16 December 2003, A27.

<sup>vi</sup> Office of Congressman Ike Skelton, “Skelton Urges Rumsfeld To Improve Cultural Awareness Training.” Press release, 23 October 2003, quoted in McFate, Montgomery. “Anthropology and counterinsurgency: the strange story of their curious relationship”. *Military Review* 85, no. 2 (2005): 24-38. Similar sentiments can still be found on-line at Rep. Skelton’s official website, but none dated earlier than 2004.

<sup>vii</sup> Scales, “Culture –Centric Warfare,” 33.

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xi</sup> McFate, Montgomery, and Andrea Jackson, “An Organizational Solution for DOD’s Cultural Knowledge Needs,” *Military Review*, July-August, 2005, 20.

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid. p 20.

<sup>xiii</sup> Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC, February 2006), A 4-5.

<sup>xiv</sup> Shuford, J.L. “President’s Forum.” *Naval War College Review* 59, no.3, (Summer, 2006): 18. The requirements to which the Admiral refers are contained in Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3126.01, Language and Regional Expertise and Planning (23 January, 2006).

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid. 21.

<sup>xvi</sup> Cultural Awareness and the Military, a bibliography compiled by Diana Simpson,

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Bibliographer, Muir S. Fairchild Research Information Center, Maxwell AFB, AL November 2007, accessed online at: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/aul/bibs/culture.htm>, on 21 October 2008.

<sup>xvii</sup> See <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/> for frequent articles on cultural awareness. Glenn, David. "Anthropologists in a War Zone: Scholars Debate Their Role." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 30, 2007. "Critics of the Human Terrain System say that armed anthropologists in military uniforms cannot possibly be getting voluntary informed consent—a principle at the core of the discipline's code of practice—from their subjects." <http://chronicle.com/free/v54/i14/14a00101.htm>

Vic Snyder, "Testimony," House, *Defense Language and Cultural Awareness Transformation: To what end? At what cost?: Hearing before the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Subcommittee*, 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 2008, [http://armedservices.house.gov/apps/list/speech/armedsvc\\_dem/snyderos070908.shtml](http://armedservices.house.gov/apps/list/speech/armedsvc_dem/snyderos070908.shtml) (accessed 29 October 2008). In his opening statement, Subcommittee Chairman Vic Snyder said "...this is an area with profound implications for our success at adapting to the new realities of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, with the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan as prime examples."

Coles, John P., "Full Spectrum Intelligence Support for the Joint Commander: Incorporating Cultural Intelligence Into Joint Doctrine".

<sup>xviii</sup> Sean T. Keane, "Know Your Enemy and Know Yourself: Assessing Progress Developing Cultural Competence to Enhance Operational Effectiveness".

<sup>xix</sup> In April 2005, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz reissued DOD Directive 1315.17, Military Department Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs.

<sup>xx</sup> James A. Karcanes, "Cultural Competence and the Operational Commander: Moving Beyond Cultural Awareness into Culture-centric War." p. 13.

<sup>xxi</sup> Wunderle, 10-11.

<sup>xxii</sup> In general usage, the term competence or competent can mean anything from barely adequate to the level reached by a seasoned professional, depending on context, nationality (American enthusiasm vs. British understatement) or body language, such as the difference between a nod and a slight sneer when describing a mutual acquaintance as "competent." Wunderle's Cultural Competence is a worthy goal, but perhaps a distant one, since it would take anyone in any field a great deal of training, experience and even native intelligence (in some form) to regularly achieve "insight into the intentions of specific actors and groups."

<sup>xxiii</sup> Wunderle, 87.

<sup>xxiv</sup> HTS Timeline: <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/htstimeline.html> accessed 19 October 2008.

<sup>xxv</sup> <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/faqs.html>

Wunderle, William D. 2006:64. "In April 2005, the Commanding General (CG), Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), outlined the requirement for 'leaders who can understand and apply knowledge of cultures' to facilitate the creation of agile and joint expeditionary capable

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forces. He established broad, overarching guidance that recognizes ‘cultural training as a Common Core for all levels of PME and directed an emphasis on the instruction in all NCOES and company-grade officer PME courses.’”

<sup>xxvi</sup> Milan S. Sturgis. Human Terrain Analysis Team Lead/Senior Social Scientist at CJTF 101, Bagram, Afghanistan, personal communication via phone (6 October 2008) and email (30 September 2008).

<sup>xxvii</sup> Steven Rotkoff. Deputy Program Manager of the Human Terrain System program at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Personal communication by telephone on 29 October 2008.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Franz Boas became the first professor of anthropology at Columbia University in New York, in 1899. He taught there for over 40 years, training many of the prominent early anthropologists, such as Alfred Kroeber, Edward Sapir, Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead.

<sup>xxix</sup> Montgomery McFate. “Anthropology and counterinsurgency: the strange story of their curious relationship.” This is a good capsule history of how anthropologists have worked with governments in the past to aid colonial conquest, repress rebellion and fight wars. In 2005 Dr. McFate was cited as an American Association for the Advancement of Science Defense Policy Fellow at the Office of Naval Research in Arlington, VA.

<sup>xxx</sup> <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>, accessed 22 October 2008.

<sup>xxxi</sup> <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>, accessed 22 October 2008.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn. Professor of Anthropology at Rhode Island College and a former president of the AAA Commission on Ethics. Personal communication via email and phone on 21 October 2008.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxxv</sup> <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1228>

Link to a speech by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates to the Association of American Universities (Washington, D.C.) April 14, 2008.

“With the Minerva initiative, we envision a consortia of universities that will promote research in specific areas. These consortia could also be repositories of open-source documentary archives. The Department of Defense, perhaps in conjunction with other government agencies, could provide the funding for these projects.”

<sup>xxxvi</sup> For Africa, see Pakenham, Thomas. “*A Scramble for Africa*.” Random House New York 1991.

After the First World War, the father of American anthropology, Professor Franz Boas of Columbia University, wrote a letter to *The Nation* (20 December 1919, p. 797) condemning unnamed fellow scientists: “at least four men who carry on anthropological work, while employed as government agents,” so that they had “prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies.”

For a brief resume of some anthropologists who were active in World War Two, see the article by

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David Price “The Lessons From Second World War anthropology.” *Anthropology Today* 18, no. 3, June 2002.

Anthropology Professor Laura Nader has written about “The phantom factor: Impact of the Cold War on anthropology.” In N. Chomsky (ed.) *The Cold War and the university* (New York: New Press, 1997), 107-146.

And Ayala Ochert wrote an article entitled “One Hundred Years of Attitude –Anthropology at Berkeley” for the *Cal Alumni Magazine* of June, 2002, that touched on the controversy over working in Thailand and Vietnam: “During the Vietnam War, when [George] Foster was president of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), he clashed with colleague Gerald Berreman, a leading anti-war critic and a member of the AAA Committee on Ethics, when it came out that some anthropologists had assisted the government with its counter-insurgency efforts in Indochina. “The information gathered by anthropologists was being used, for example, to identify which villages to napalm, based on the characteristic house types of different ethnic groups,” says Berreman. “We felt that was unethical; the first responsibility of an anthropologist should be to the people they study, and nothing should be done to jeopardize them.” Berreman had earlier addressed the topic with some passion in his Presidential address to the Southwestern Anthropological Association on 14 March 1967. He later rewrote that address, which was then printed in Morton H. Fried, ed., *Readings in Anthropology* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968), 845-857.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Roberto J. Gonzalez. “Human Terrain – Past, present and future applications.” *Anthropology Today* 24, no. 1 (February 2008): 21. “It is far more likely that HTS was created as an espionage programme.” And Glenn, David. “Anthropologists in a War Zone: Scholars Debate Their Role.” *Chronicle of Higher Education* 54, no.14 (November 30, 2007): A1. “Critics of the Human Terrain System say that armed anthropologists in military uniforms cannot possibly be getting voluntary informed consent...”

<sup>xxxviii</sup> David Glenn. “Anthropologists in a War Zone: Scholars Debate Their Role” also has a response from an HTS member in Afghanistan: “Nothing in the team’s work, Mr. Damon says, had to do with selecting targets for military action. If the brigade leader requested a line of research that appeared to deal with targeting he says, the team would refuse to take it, telling the commander to send the request instead to his intelligence division.”

<sup>xxxix</sup> Gregory Paul Meyjes. “Plan ‘C’ is for Culture: Out of Iraq, Opportunity.” AUSA’s Institute of Land Warfare Publication no. 07-4, June 2007. “A profound knowledge of the nature of culture and its influence on perception—including one’s own—is essential.”

<sup>xl</sup> Shuford, J.L., 18.

<sup>xli</sup> Hugh Gusterson. “Anthropologists at War,” *Anthropology Today* 23, no. 4 (August 2007): 23. See the letter from George Mason University Professor Hugh Gusterson, responding to David Kilcullen’s earlier criticism of Roberto Gonzalez in *Anthropology Today*. “Psychiatrists, priests and journalists, for example, have professional codes that forbid them to violate covenanted relationships of confidentiality except in extreme situations. Many anthropologists assume that we do, or should, live by an analogous imperative rather than prostituting ourselves as hired intelligence-gatherers for those in power.”

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## Appendix A

### STATEMENTS ON ETHICS

#### Principles of Professional Responsibility

**Adopted by the Council of the American Anthropological Association May 1971**

*(As amended through November 1986)*

**Note:** *This statement of principles is not intended to supersede previous statements and resolutions of the Association. Its intent is to clarify professional responsibilities in the chief areas of professional concern to anthropologists. [Emphasis below added by author.]*

#### Preamble

Anthropologists work in many parts of the world in close personal association with the peoples and situations they study. Their professional situation is, therefore, uniquely varied and complex. They are involved with their discipline, their colleagues, their students, their sponsors, their subjects, their own and host governments, the particular individuals and groups with whom they do their fieldwork, other populations and interest groups in the nations within which they work, and the study of processes and issues affecting general human welfare. In a field of such complex involvements, misunderstandings, conflicts, and the necessity to make choices among conflicting values are bound to arise and to generate ethical dilemmas. It is a prime responsibility of anthropologists to anticipate these and to plan to resolve them in such a way as to do damage neither to those whom they study nor, insofar as possible, to their scholarly community. Where these conditions cannot be met, the anthropologist would be well-advised not to pursue the particular piece of research.

The following principles are deemed fundamental to the anthropologist's responsible, ethical pursuit of the profession.

#### 1. Relations with those studied

**In research, anthropologists' paramount responsibility is to those they study. When there is a conflict of interest, these individuals must come first.** Anthropologists must do everything in their power to protect the physical, social, and psychological welfare and to honor the dignity and privacy of those studied.

a. Where research involves the acquisition of material and information transferred on the assumption of trust between persons, it is axiomatic that the rights, interests, and sensitivities of those studied must be safeguarded.

b. The aims of the investigation should be communicated as well as possible to the informant.

c. **Informants have a right to remain anonymous.** This right should be respected both where it has been promised explicitly and where no clear understanding to the contrary has been reached.

**These strictures apply to the collection of data by means of cameras, tape recorders, and other data-gathering devices, as well as to data collected in face-to-face interviews or in participant observation. Those being studied should understand the capacities of such devices; they should be free to reject them if they wish; and if they accept them, the results obtained should be consonant with the informant's right to welfare, dignity and privacy.**

(1) Despite every effort being made to preserve anonymity, it should be made clear to informants that such anonymity may be compromised unintentionally.

(2) When professionals or others have used pseudonyms to maintain anonymity, others should respect this decision and the reasons for it by not revealing indiscriminately the true identity of such committees, persons or other data.



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- d. There should be no exploitation of individual informants for personal gain. Fair return should be given them for all services.
  - e. There is an obligation to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication on the general population being studied.
  - f. The anticipated consequences of research should be communicated as fully as possible to the individuals and groups likely to be affected.
  - g. In accordance with the Association's general position on clandestine and secret research, no reports should be provided to sponsors that are not also available to the general public and, where practicable, to the population studied.**
  - h. Every effort should be exerted to cooperate with members of the host society in the planning and execution of research projects.
  - i. All of the above points should be acted upon in full recognition of the social and cultural pluralism of host societies and the consequent plurality of values, interests and demands in those societies. This diversity complicates choice making in research, but ignoring it leads to irresponsible decisions.

## **2. Responsibility to the public**

Anthropologists are also responsible to the public--all presumed consumers of their professional efforts. To them they owe a commitment to candor and to truth in the dissemination of their research results and in the statement of their opinions as students of humanity.

**a. Anthropologists should not communicate findings secretly to some and withhold them from others. . . .**

## **3. Responsibility to the discipline**

Anthropologists bear responsibility for the good reputation of the discipline and its practitioners.

**a. Anthropologists should undertake no secret research or any research whose results cannot be freely derived and publicly reported.**

b. Anthropologists should avoid even the appearance of engaging in clandestine research, by fully and freely disclosing the aims and sponsorship of all research.

c. Anthropologists should attempt to maintain such a level of integrity and rapport in the field that, by their behavior and example, they will not jeopardize future research there. The responsibility is not to analyze and report so as to offend no one, but to conduct research in a way consistent with a commitment to honesty, open inquiry, clear communication of sponsorship and research aims, and concern for the welfare and privacy of informants. . . .

## **Responsibility to sponsors**

In relations with sponsors of research, anthropologists should be honest about their qualifications, capabilities, aims. They thus face the obligation, prior to entering any commitment for research, to reflect sincerely upon the purposes of their sponsors in terms of their past behavior.

**Anthropologists should be especially careful not to promise or imply acceptance of conditions contrary to their professional ethics or competing commitments. This requires that they require of sponsors full disclosure of the sources of funds, personnel, aims of the institution and the research project, and disposition of research results. Anthropologists must retain the right to make all ethical decisions in their research. They should enter into no secret agreements with sponsors regarding research, results or reports.**

## **6. Responsibilities to one's own government and to host governments**

In relation with their own government and with host governments, research anthropologists should be honest and candid. **They should demand assurance that they will not be required to compromise their professional responsibilities and ethics as a condition of their permission**

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**to pursue research. Specifically, no secret research, no secret reports or debriefings of any kind should be agreed to or given.** If these matters are clearly understood in advance, serious complications and misunderstandings can generally be avoided.

### **Epilogue**

In the final analysis, anthropological research is a human undertaking, dependent upon choices for which the individual bears ethical as well as scientific responsibility. That responsibility is a human, not superhuman, responsibility. To err is human, to forgive humane. This statement of principles of professional responsibility is not designed to punish, but to provide guidelines which can minimize the occasions upon which there is a need to forgive. When anthropologists, by their actions, jeopardize peoples studied, professional colleagues, students or others, or if they otherwise betray their professional commitments, their colleagues may legitimately inquire into the propriety of those actions, and take such measures as lie within the legitimate powers of their Association as the membership of the Association deems appropriate.

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